Jimmy Savile allegations – guidance in answering questions

With so much public interest in the appalling allegations against Jimmy Savile and continuing commentary on how the BBC is responding to these and subsequent allegations of sexual harassment, BBC employees are likely to be asked to comment, both professionally and personally on these issues.

This note provides guidance on what actions the BBC is taking and is designed to help you in answering such questions.

What is the BBC doing?

Our first thoughts are with the victims of the abuse and we have offered a heartfelt public apology to them. We are taking the necessary steps to understand what happened and to try to make sure it can never happen here again.

- We're working closely with the police to support their investigations. We also put ourselves forward to appear at the Select Committee to account for ourselves in public.

- The two independent inquiries we've set up have begun their work. They now need to be allowed to get on and do their job of establishing the facts. They will report back as soon as possible. They are:

 - The Smith Review – led by Dame Janet Smith, a former Court of Appeal Judge, into Jimmy Savile at the BBC, the surrounding culture and practices and whether our child protection and whistleblowing policies are fit for purpose.

 - The Pollard Review - led by Nick Pollard, former Head of Sky News, into whether there were any failings in the BBC management of the Newsnight investigation.

- Dinah Rose QC will also work alongside HR to assess claims of sexual harassment at the BBC, review our related policy and ensure our existing structures and resources support complainants.

- We continue to report on this situation with editorial independence. We have processes in place to avoid any conflict of interest. Helen Boaden continues to lead News Group while Adrian Van-Klaveren will take over editorial lead on Jimmy Savile related matters.

What to do if you become aware of allegations of abuse or harassment

- Ø Any colleague, past or present, with information about the Jimmy Savile allegations, should contact the BBC Investigations team (call 020 8752 4168 during office hours), or go direct to the police (either call your local police station by dialing 101 or call the NSPCC phoneline on 0808 800 5000).

- Ø If you have a concern relating to harassment or intimidation of any sort, you can speak with your line manager, HR adviser, the BBC Investigations team or local trade union representative. Alternatively, there is an independent external whistleblowing helpline (0800 374199).

- Ø There is support and guidance for programme teams, approached by contributors or members of the public, on Gateway here.

- Ø Further information on the support for any colleague affected by any of these issues, including confidential counseling, can be found here.

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